There are on portions of this range short unexpired leases in private hands; some (the very worst), the estate of the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. As a general rule the old usage is good to leave to private enterprise and to the improved value of localities, the renewing of old and decaying tenements; but in the case *of the Park*—the most important feature of London—here most assuredly the office of great public functionaries should interfere to maintain not only the health but the beauty of their charge in rangership: the improved taste of the day in horticulture, arts, and architecture in particular, require it. What a great builder would or might have done is not the question, for he would have speculated for personal benefit alone: the competent and responsible public officer (if such, indeed, can be found) should have some control in such matters, but that control should be under rigid public scrutiny.

It would be needless to allude to the vexed question of the Glass Palace, its aptitude for a winter garden and shrubbery, the inestimable benefits it would confer on the whole community in this country of invernal fog, drizzle, and frost,—how 20,000 of even the labouring population might then enjoy the reviving influence of an Italian climate, and at the same time acquire a taste for, and probably an acquaintance with, floriculture and horticulture, together with improved health, and the humanizing effects which the contemplation of nature's bloom infallibly impresses on those who hold communings with the floral creation. If 10,000 only had admission at one time, 20,000 would probably frequent the winter garden in the course of six hours, on a winter day; and this at but 2d. a-head would produce 166*l.* 13*s.* 4d. a-day.

Supposing the week-days at an admission of 4d. to give but half the visitants, or 83*l.* 6*s.* 8d. per diem, then the annual returns from the copper toll would realize an income of 34,750*l.* 13*s.* 4d. (season tickets, at two guineas, and annual, at three guineas, would yield much more): this would be enough to support the best staff of gardeners, to stock the building or *conservatoire* (the phrase, it is hoped, will make it the more popular) with the choicest productions of the *temperate zone;* and to keep in permanent repair the structure.

There are other vested interests than those of the Lord Chief Justice to be considered,—the rights of property invested, which in good faith and justice, ought to be requited, if the Palace remain where it is.

Foremost amongst the requirements in the Parks is a *spacious* and *well-lighted thoroughfare* for carriages, open *night and day*, leading from Bayswater to Kensington-gore: such a causeway would be a real benefit to the whole community.

Crochets of mine, which have been published, are of course public property; and as they are palpable to all, must have been the subject of commentary: that they are forcibly urged is matter of gratulation to all: if the issue be good, it can be consolatory to none more than to QUONDAM.

ROYAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH ARCHITECTS.

On Monday evening, the 17th inst., the Institute of Architects re-assembled to open the present session, Mr. Fowler, vice-president, in the chair, and a long list of donations was announced, the gatherings of the vacation, including the first part of a new architectural periodical from Berlin, conducted in part by Herr Strack, and an engraving explanatory of a project by Mons. Hector Horeau of a submarine railway to connect France and England,—a project, by the way, also set forth on this side of the channel some years ago, and for which, if our information be correct, the bed of the channel offers more facilities than might be expected.

A clever fellow is Hector Horeau. Many of our readers will remember his design for the '51 Exhibition Building. In his own country he is constantly making himself heard of. We remember finding him some years ago on our first visit to Paris as a student, in a bright red morning jacket and trowsers to match, with a bevy of the wits of Paris about him, who made his studio rather a lively place for severe study. In Paris they see no reason why flowers may not be grown by the side of any road.

We may particularise amongst the donations the presentation by Professor Donaldson, Foreign Secretary, of a curious MS. volume of notes and sketches by Willey Reveley, who visited Athens and the Levant, after Stuart, and edited the third volume of "The Antiquities of Athens." Reveley was a pupil of Chambers, and built a church at Southampton. Annexed to the book is a letter from Mr. Towneley, the celebrated collector.

When thanks had been voted to the several donors, the Foreign Secretary brought under the notice of the meeting some incidents in connection with the visit of various foreign architects to London during the past season. The reader said, "I am gratified in being able to state that the impression on the minds of most of these intelligent and experienced architects, in regard to the state of our art in this country, is extremely satisfactory. Unfostered as the English architect is by the immediate patronage of the Government, generally limited in the means placed at his disposal, they have found that he has sought, and not without success, to ennoble his conceptions, not so much by the refinements of decoration or the concurrence of the sister arts, as by the largeness of disposition, by simplicity of design, and by the dimensions of his work. The noble—the useful—the convenient—the necessaries and first wants of life have been sought in all their highest development, rather than the ornamental; and success has to a great degree attended this peculiar and sober treatment of architecture in England. The variety and excellence of our materials, now being fully brought into play by skilful adaptation, also seemed to strike our foreign friends.

I am led to hope that this visit and interchange of courtesies may not be without fruit upon the future development of architecture among our refined neighbours in the Continental states. For if *we* have still to learn to invest our buildings with more of the graces of the higher qualities of artistic feeling, and the public to appreciate them, *they* have also felt the importance of consulting the ordinary claims of human existence still more profoundly, and recognise with still more enlarged views the happy influence which architecture in its widest sense may have in the great mission of ministering to the comfort and physical well-being of the labouring classes—a moral as well as a physical mission, deeply felt by us all in reforming the habits of the vicious, and soothing the misfortunes of the afflicted and needy.

Nor can I forbear to mention the pleasure with which some of our modern metropolitan churches have been visited, combining convenience of disposition with religious solemnity and picturesqueness of effect.

The varied collection of Assyrian antiquities, the marbles from Asia Minor, and the recent decorations of the sculpture rooms in the British Museum, so beautifully carried out under the direction of our Fellow Mr. Sydney Smirke, were unreservedly admired. And I should add also, in reference to the noble sculptures recently introduced by Sir Richard Westmacott, R.A., in the tympanum of the central portico of this National Museum, that they elicited very great commendation."

The following is a list of honorary and corresponding members of the institute, and other foreign architects, who have been here:—Messieurs Blouet, Caristie, Daly, De Joly and Son, Dusillion and Son, Gourlier, Hittorff and Son, Hector Horeau, Herard, and L. Vaudoyer, of Paris; Messieurs Epellet, and Girault de Prangey, of Arras; Herr Zanth, of Stuttgard; Klenze, of Munich; Strack, Diebitsch, and Hesse, of Berlin; Messrs. Forster and Son, and Rosner, of Vienna; Mynheers Weeninck, and Zocher, jun., of the Hague; Mynheer de Yong, of Amsterdam; Herr Hetsch and Son, of Copenhagen; Herr Hansen, formerly of Athens, now of Copenhagen; Mynheer Pyk, Professor Extraordinary of the University of Leyden; Herr Stamman, of Hamburg; Messieurs Agea, of Mexico; Herr Zwirner, of Cologne; and M. Gainaud, of Paris.

To the paper of the evening, read by Mr. Papworth, "On some of the productions connected with architecture in the Exhibition of 1851," we shall return hereafter.

CELLAR DWELLINGS.

MODEL LODGING-HOUSES FOR THE LABOURING CLASSES.

Notification as to the discontinuance of the use of cellar dwellings, under the Public Health Act, the Common Lodging Houses Act, and the Labouring Classes Lodging Houses Act, has been directed by the General Board of Health to the Local Boards of Health of 138 towns and places to which upon petition the Public Health Act has been applied.

The report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Crime, and the Means of establishing a Constabulary Force, showed, by evidence received from every part of the country, that the common lodging-houses form, in most cases, the chief hotbeds of crime in country towns; and it subsequently appeared, from similar evidence set forth in the First Sanitary Report, that overcrowded and filthy lodging-houses are the places where epidemic disease usually first breaks out, and is the most obstinate and fatal.

Hitherto the excuse or defence of local administrations for these admitted states of misery and depravity, and for the continuance of a condition of the poor disgraceful to a Christian community, has been the want of power or means either to regulate the existing lodging-houses or cellar dwellings, or to make other and suitable provision for the accommodation of their inmates. To attempt to diminish the overcrowding of common lodging-houses by ejecting the lodgers without providing fitter habitations would, it has been said, and often very justly, only increase the number of miserable outcasts who are found sleeping in out-houses or in the streets. To eject families dwelling in cellars, without any suitable provision for housing them, would be to force them to overcrowd upper rooms, and a doubly crowded upper room might be even worse than a less crowded, though damper, cellar dwelling.

But now, by the Act for the better regulation of common lodging-houses, local authorities are imperatively required to put the existing houses known by that name under regulation, while by the new Act "to encourage the establishment of well-ordered lodging-houses for the labouring classes," they will be enabled to provide better substitutes for such places than any which now exist.

Local Boards, even if model lodging-houses were not self-supporting, might deem themselves justified, the General Board thinks, in laying out the public money for the prevention of charges on the public consequent on continuance of the existing evils.

For the information of Local Boards of Health, the General Board has directed an examination to be made of the existing model lodgings and dwellings, and plans and specifications to be prepared as to their expense, with such particulars of improvements in the principles and economy of construction as could be collected from the most recent practical experience. Copies of this information will, when ready, be transmitted to any of the local authorities empowered to apply the Acts referred to, who may be anxious for it, with a view to the execution of these measures.

To let or occupy as a dwelling *any* vault, cellar, or underground room built or rebuilt after 31st August, 1848, or not let or occupied before that date, is now illegal, and has been so since the end of August 1848.

*** We may mention here that the "Lodging Houses Acts," edited by Mr. Robert Strange, Barrister-at-Law, have been published for the Society for the Improvement of the Condition of the Labouring Classes.*

* Shaw and Sons, Fetter-lane, 1851.

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